

A MUSICAL CRITIGISM.

By Roby Vex of the Evening Noose.

I SUFFERED excruciating agony at the concert given Wednesday evening by the *Comme il-faut* society. I observed a young man in the seat next to me go through certain motions denoting pleasure, at intervals during the performance, and I laughed in my sleeve. I knew he did not know as much as I know about music, and his apparent enjoyment, while I was perfectly miserable, first shocked and then amused me. On the way to the concert I accidentally stepped on the tail of a yellow dog with long hair and one ear that was badly chewed. The dog howled and I smiled. Then he jumped at me. I smiled more enthusiastically, and gently but firmly kicked him into the middle of the street. Then I proceeded on my way to the concert. I know that my adventure with the dog had nothing to do with the concert; but I do not pass it over on that account. The ventilation in the concert hall was bad, and I noticed several persons chewing gum. One young lady wore a very pretty hat, and in front of me were three young men with new stock ties, and a vacant stare. There was no carpet on the floor, and one of the chandeliers gave a somewhat sickly light. I particularly observed that the audience was large. I experienced a brief sensation of pleasure when I heard some one say as I passed down the aisle, "There's Roby Vex, of the Noose." My modesty did not permit me to turn around and identify the person who made the remark. I have no doubt it was some one who has received valuable musical instruction from my criticisms which I endeavor to construct in a thoroughly scientific manner, and yet make them so simple that even a child can understand them. I nodded my head at exactly 8:15 and the concert began. Miss Gurdline Smithers led off with the "High School Cadets" march. Her number was really the only part of the program that was tolerable. Miss Smithers plays *con comodo*. At the proper time the selection was decidedly *eveille*, and her execution throughout was *gentillezza*, with just enough of the *giubbiloso*. In a piece of this kind care should be taken not to play it *pacatamente*, and to my gratification Miss Smithers introduced the proper amount of *piacere*. A feature of this artist's performance is her skillful exploitation of *appoggiatura*, a difficult feat by the way. I intend to keep my eye on Miss Smithers and expect to see her achieve much success. Next on the program was a vocal solo by Mr. William Jenkins. Mr. Jenkins was evidently sick, and I have no hesitancy in saying that he ought to have stayed at home and sought his bed, instead of venturing to appear in public. I did not like him at all. He made me tired. When he opened his mouth I immediately felt the fever and ague crawling all over me, and my spinal column felt as though some one were moving a jagged saw up and down on it. My teeth were all on edge, and perspiration, great beads of it, dropped from my manly brow. I can best describe his singing by calling it a *chiucchiurloja*. The tempo was execrable, and there was altogether too much *rabbia con*. His singing was notable only for one thing, its *durate*. His voice ought to be filed down and soaked in oil. Then there was a chorus song by fifty male and female voices that made me long to get out into the open air again and meet the yellow dog once more. It was given *contretems*. The selection was a romantic one, but there was absolutely no *estropoetico*. Mrs. A. B. C. Darlington attempted to sing a difficult aria from "Il Trovatore," but her voice was wheezy, and she flatted, and did other dreadful things calculated to raise my ire. The song ought to have been given *carezzando*, but it was shrieked out in a wild manner, *con ismomia*. There were some other numbers on the program, but I could not stay. I was reduced to desperate straits, and in the middle of a selection on the piano I fled from the hall precipitately. In going down the steps I passed a girl with red hair, and on reaching the street I saw in front of the door a white horse. The moon was shining clear and bright, and the mud having dried up, I took off my overshoes and carried them in my overcoat pockets. I arrived home safely, saying to myself, "Roby, this musical criticism business is ———." Then I went to bed and dreamed about myself and my great knowledge of music, and of the wide swath that I cut, and several times my dream turned into a nightmare, and I would find myself standing on my head in the middle of the room. I passed a very disagreeable night, and when I thought, in my waking moments, of the criticism I would have to write in the morning and of the colic that it would communicate to the Noose readers, I grew almost frantic, and in my excitement I made small ribbons of my *robe de nuit*, and once I arose and walked

around the block in the same be-ribboned robe and with nothing on my feet. When the light of morning finally broke in upon me I was much quieter, so quiet that I could realize my condition perfectly, and I was aware that paresis had at last got me in its clutches. I remarked to myself, before going down to breakfast, "Roby, this musical criticism business is ———."

ROBY VEX.

LITERARY NOTES.

There are several contributions to the *May Atlantic* worthy of more than common note. One of them, "From Blomidon to Smoky" is the first of a series of four articles by the late Frank Bolles. The papers represent his last studies of nature, and were his last literary work. They were all the outcome of a summer excursion through Nova Scotia in 1893. The memory of Francis Parkman is honored by articles from his fellow-historians, Justin Winsor and John Fiske. Mr. Fiske's paper is the longer, and all the space at his command has been used to appraise and illuminate Mr. Parkman's work with extraordinary clearness. Professor T. C. Mendenhall, in his article, "The Henry," on the newly chosen term of electrical measurement, gives the American scientist, Joseph Henry, his rank with the great electricians of the world. Gilbert Parker, the young Anglo-Canadian, whose stories are coming more and more into notice, contributes a tragic tale of the Hudson Bay Company, "Three Commandments in the Vulgar Tongue." Mrs. Delend's serial, "Philip and his Wife," proceeds, in company with attractive papers of literature, art, and travel; and the gayety of the number is considerably enhanced by the appearance in the last of Sir Edward Strachey's "Talks at a Country House" of some hitherto unpublished rhymes by the delightful Edward Lear of the "Nonsense Verses."

Admirers of Balzac will be glad to learn that Dodd, Mead & Company have in the press a translation of the hitherto unpublished Balzac Letters addressed to Madame de Hanaka. Few yet understand their importance. Their interest for the student is great, for in a revelation of their author that is impressive and almost final, they confirm to the full the view that Balzac was no sordid realist, that an idealist he was from the beginning and that romance was essential to him to the end. These letters written to Evelina de Hanaka, who, whether as friend or wife, helped Balzac to obtain in his best work what he sought for—the intimacy of the heart—are an exhibition of the artist that is simply and absolutely romantic.

Scribner's Magazine for May opens with an article of unusual importance, entitled "Some Episodes of Mountaineering," by Edwin Lord Weeks, describing some of his own stirring adventures, while mountain climbing in the Alps with illustrations furnished by the same hand. The author and artist is equally skilful as a picturesque writer and as an artist of rare ability, both in landscape and figure work. He has in this article given a reality to Alpine mountain climbing that no previous popular article has given. Some of these marvellous illustrations show daring feats, made from sketches on the spot when the artist himself was in a most difficult position, and showing the pose and action of those with him while actually accomplishing a difficult bit of climbing.

DOXOLOGY AND ACCOMPANIMENT.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
(Here wrap your muffler round your throat.)
Praise Him all creatures here below,
(Now get into your overcoat.)
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,
(Right here put your rubbers on.)
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
(By this time you are out and gone.)

Economy and Strength.

Valuable vegetable remedies are used in the preparation of Hood's Sarsaparilla in such a peculiar manner as to retain the full medicinal value of every ingredient. Thus Hood's Sarsaparilla combines economy and strength and is the only remedy of which "100 Doses One Dollar" is true. Be sure to get Hood's.